

## COMEDY HOLDS FULL SWAY AT LOCAL THEATERS THIS WEEK.

## THE WASHINGTON HERALD

DRAMATIC DEPARTMENT.

E. RICHARD SCHAYER, Editor

## PROGRAMME FOR THE WEEK.

Columbia	Adelaide Thurston, in "Miss Ananias"
Belasco	Mabel Hite, in "A Certain Party"
National	Andrew Mack and Polite Vaudeville
Chas. H. Seltzer	Andrew Mack and Polite Vaudeville
Gayety	"Vanity Fair," Burlesque
Lyceum	"World of Pleasure," Burlesque
Cosmos	Vaudeville and Pictures
Majestic	Vaudeville and Pictures
Plaza	Moving Pictures
Virginia	Moving Pictures
Alhambra	Moving Pictures
New Howard Theater	Black Patti Musical Comedy

IN reviewing the opening performance of "An Old New Yorker" at the Belasco Theater last Monday, the writer took the producing manager, William A. Brady, to task for presenting this play in its crude form for the approval of Washington audiences. The criticism was leveled at the play, which, in the writer's opinion, was so glaringly at fault constructively, and contained so many false notes that jarred unpleasantly on one's sense of the fitness of things, that it seemed as though Mr. Brady and his associates must have recognized the need of a complete revision of the manuscript at the first reading, or, at the latest, the first rehearsal. The review, published Tuesday morning, has brought the following interesting letter from Mr. Brady:

Dramatic Editor, Washington Herald:

I have just read your criticism of the production offered by Mr. Thomas A. Wise and myself at the Belasco Theater, on Monday evening, under the title of "An Old New Yorker."

I am very much obliged to you for the compliments you pay to me at the beginning of the notice, but I must make an objection to certain statements you make in your notice. I cannot admit it to be a fact that the performance of "An Old New Yorker" on Monday night was an insult to Washington theatergoers. It was not a try-out in any sense of the word, the play having been carefully rehearsed for three weeks. It had been competently cast with the best actors that money could secure, and the production was perfect in the smallest detail. The scenery was complete, the furniture had been selected after weeks and weeks of careful searching in the shops of New York that deal in old antique, and I assure you it was no easy matter to procure and remove the properties that were used in the production at the Belasco Theater on Monday night.

If you take the trouble to ask Mr. Harrison Rhodes, who was there at the time, he will tell you that it took nearly a month to collect the properties, furniture, etc., used in our production.

I saw the performance on Monday night, and the actors were perfect. There were no signs of a lack of preparation in their acting, and what you mean by characterizing the representation as a try-out, I hardly comprehend. I have no desire to treat Washington, as you suggest, as a one-night-stand factory town, and I dispute with you the statement that "An Old New Yorker" was presented at the Belasco Theater on Monday night as an unfinished production. It was as perfect as I could make it, and I feel hurt by the statement you have made about it. You know we must start our plays somewhere, and we producing fellows consider Washington the best city outside of New York—for at least there we get an intelligent and discriminating audience.

If you will be fair enough to look back a little way, you will find that my first night was just as perfect as any that Mr. Belasco has given in seasons past. Our curtain was down at 11:10, the actors did not stick, and the audience seemed to enjoy it. Please tell me where the try-out came in. Of course, there may have been long stretches of dialogue which we will have to cut out, and some of the smaller people may have appeared ill at ease and failed to get their lines over the footlights, but, believe me, some bad actors do this whether it be a try-out or in a play that has been running a year or more. A bad actor is a bad actor, and a good play is a good play, whether it be a first night or a last night. We did not conceal the fact that the piece was being presented for the first time, and we advertised the fact that it was a try-out in the newspapers, and recognizing the fact that in your notice you give me credit for having a long and varied experience, some intelligence, and some success, I must go on to say that the first night's performance of "An Old New Yorker" at the Belasco Theater on Monday night was a remarkably smooth one, and did not cast any discredit on the author, producer, or leading actors.

Trusting you will forgive me for writing this, but I just cannot help it after reading your notice.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM A. BRADY.

The writer of the review in question, having failed to make his intent clear to Mr. Brady, a few explanatory sentences should not be out of place. Mr. Brady's response deals entirely with the question of the "production." By "production," in theatrical parlance, is meant the complete visualization of the original manuscript of a play—the scenic investiture, costuming, staging, and setting. The reviewer had little or nothing to say about the "production." Perhaps he was unjust to Mr. Brady in not extending his congratulations on the perfect scenic features of "An Old New Yorker," in which much pains must have been taken to produce so well the atmosphere of the old downtown mansion, with the armchairs in which Roscoe Conkling and Daniel Webster had sat, the Beckman wing chairs, and of the old-time office rooms of the Rock-Mason Shipping Company. Nor did the writer discuss the acting of the play at any length. Here Mr. Brady was more fortunate, for Miss Blanche Yurka and William Rosell, in two of the principal roles, were excessively annoying. Time and "space" gave opportunity only for general comment on the play itself. Mr. Brady takes exception to the phrase "try-out," as applied to the opening performance of "An Old New Yorker." He tells us that the play was rehearsed three weeks. With a play of the technical excellence of "The Easiest Way," or even "Alas Jimmy Valentine," three weeks of rehearsal should be sufficient. But "An Old New Yorker" was rehearsed for a month, and, if not strikingly original, comedy, for Thomas A. Wise—should never have been rehearsed until it was practically rewritten, or, if rehearsed, kept in rehearsal until the trying need of radical revision had been satisfied. What the writer objected to was the seeming carelessness of a producing manager of Mr. Brady's experience and ability in not revising this play before offering it to the Washington public, or any discriminating group of theatergoers.

Mr. Brady, however, apparently thinks he has a good play as it stands, with some "cutting of dialogue." The writer, therefore, is forced to confess he was mistaken in his attitude toward the manager. He accused Mr. Brady of giving a premature presentation of what he knows to be a badly written play, with the idea of whipping it into shape while "on the road." The writer wishes to revise his review to suit the facts, viz.: At the Belasco Theater last Monday William A. Brady offered an excellent "production" of one of the most pitiful attempts at playwriting we have had the misfortune to sit through this season. The play had been carefully rehearsed and the scenery and "properties" were well cast.

THESE Lenten days find the theatrical business in the doldrums. Filled with the divine spirit of self-denial, the good people of our city stay away from the theater. At two of our local playhouses last week the observers of Lenten self-sacrifice might well have fulfilled the purpose of Lenten observance by paying their \$2.00 seat and castigating their intelligence and souls in the spirit of true martyrdom. Not so at the Columbia Theater, however, where that distinguished actor, Henry Miller, played a return engagement in "The Hovey," one of the few clever plays produced this season. To stay away from the performance of this play, by indeed, a Christian self-sacrifice.

Mr. Miller is an actor of the "realistic school." His method is one of infinite repose and paucity of gesture and vocal gymnastics. When he speaks a line, we get its full force and meaning, and when he stands quietly at a table and thinks, we are able to translate his thoughts into words almost as intelligible. Much of the effectiveness of "The Hovey" rests in Mr. Miller's superb stage direction. He is a consummate master of the art of telling "stage business," and he can make silence speak with greater potency than most actors can achieve with noise and action.

THE theaters this week will not offer strictly Lenten programmes. Diversion reigns alone at all three of the principal playhouses. The Belasco and National will have a musical comedy week, with "A Certain Party" and "The Dollar Princess," respectively, and to the Columbia comes Miss Adelaide Thurston, in a comedy, "Miss Ananias," of which flatteringly reports have percolated up from the Southern cities Miss Thurston has been visiting.

E. R. S.

## FASHION EDITOR AS A CRITIC.

The leading journal of a well-known Southern city, believing that a reporter can write on one subject as well as another, has no regular dramatic critic, but sends any one of the staff not otherwise engaged to review a "show," be it burlesque, comedy, or tragedy.

The night that Adelaide Thurston appeared in that city there was a scarcity of unemployed workers in the office. The sporting editor had been sent to a suffragette meeting, the religious editor to a local hop, and the financial editor to interview a society woman who was suing her husband for divorce. There was no one else handy, so they told the fashion editor to review "Miss Ananias." This is what she wrote:

"Adelaide Thurston, always sure of a hearty welcome to this city, proved by her splendid performance of Nanny Lyle in her delightful new comedy, 'Miss Ananias,' which was presented at the Opera House last night, that she has made rapid strides in her chosen profession since she last delighted our theatergoers. In the first act Miss Thurston won her audience by her quiet, dainty charm in a grayish-linen tub frock, with a Dutch neck, that served to set off at times the full beauty of a profile that is not surpassed on the American stage, and she gave just the right touch of sweet simplicity to the role by means of the dearest little garden bonnet.

"In the second act Miss Thurston proved her varied and convincing powers in a heavily embroidered white fingered gown with curly lace yoke, made most fetching by dainty touches of pink and the sauciest little butterfly bow fastened from the ends of the tunic nestling on the lace train of the frock. With this charming gown, the actress wore a little lace cap or hat, made of wonderful bugle trimming, that was just too chic for words—a love of finish by which she furnished real climax of one of the most delightful plays our theatergoers have had the good fortune to witness this season."

ADELAIDE THURSTON.

of a white marquisette cloth evening gown, with pink Dresden ribbon caught snugly at the bottom, a lovely Dredol model. A coat of the same material enveloped the petite little body to the feet. This, with a large shepherdess hat, a white lace-trimmed jacket, and a pair of charming shoes, the actress wore a little lace cap or hat, made of wonderful bugle trimming, that was just too chic for words—a love of finish by which she furnished real climax of one of the most delightful plays our theatergoers have had the good fortune to witness this season."



ADELAIDE THURSTON AND AUGUSTUS PHILLIPS, IN "MISS ANANIAS" AT THE COLUMBIA

## THE WEEK'S PLAYBILLS.

Columbia—Adelaide Thurston.

Adelaide Thurston, Cohen & Harris' latest star, will present Catherine Chisholm Cushing's comedy, "Miss Ananias," at the Columbia Theater this week. The title role of "Miss Ananias" is said to suit Miss Thurston's temperament and versatile talents, which were first displayed when the young actress assumed the role of Lady Babbie in "The Little Minister" and played it with great success on tour at the time of Maude Adams' famous New York run of the Barrie play. The next season Miss Thurston supported Mrs. Le Moine in "The Greatest Thing in the World," after which she was promoted to the stellar ranks. Since that time she has won popularity all over the country in the leading roles of "Polly Primrose," "At Coy Corners," "The Triumph of Betty," "The Girl from Out Yonder," "The Woman's Hour," and "Contrary Wind." It remained for Cohen & Harris to provide her with a play, a company, and a production such as she never had before. The company is made up of such well-known players as Augustus Phillips, A. S. Byron, Henry Carlin, Marion Korb, Laura Bennett, Edna von Buelow, and Constance Glover.

Miss Thurston has the role of one of those lovable, disinterested women, who are so busy thinking of others that they have no thought of themselves. Into her quiet life comes a handsome young man who has lost his sight in an automobile accident. At first he is only a patient, who must be tended like a child. Having no mother, he is nursed by her except by her voice and manner, he imagines her to be a beautiful young girl, although in reality she is over thirty and is prim and plain. When he tells her how he has learned to love him and cannot resist the temptation to deceive him. Then comes an operation by a skillful surgeon that restores the lover's sight. Miss Ananias straightens out matters and wins a husband by the aid of an absent sister and a clever dressmaker.

Belasco—Mabel Hite.

Beginning Tuesday evening, on account of the Tetrazzini concert to-morrow night, Mabel Hite and her company of well-known players will fill out of the week at the Belasco in "A Certain Party," the Townsend-Malley farce recently converted into a musical piece by Edgar Smith and Robert Hood Bowers.

The play pretends to be little more than a humorous expose of a characteristic American political muddle. One may trust Frank Ward O'Malley, whose barbed pen has often left its mark in political struggles of reality, to put together situations enough to keep a score of characters busy all evening. O'Malley has happy faculty of extracting a lot of humor from the real political contests of even of years, as any one who keeps eye on O'Malley's column in the New York Sun can testify. Surely with characters furnished by his dramatic partner, Edward W. Townsend, the author of "Chimmie Fadden," and the jests, jingles, and business provided by Smith, and Cady, humorists well known to the vaudeville stage, will be seen in their Gertrude comedy roles, especially written for them. Among the other well-known and popular comedians who help to make folks laugh are Harry Marks Stewart, Will Fox, Harry E. Yost, Edna von Buelow, Herbert Terry, Manning and Drew, and Bernard Kelly. The music is by Theodore Morse and Leo Edwards, the lyrics by Ed Lee. The piece is in two acts and seven scenes.

National—"Dollar Princess."

Charles Frohman will present the charming musical play, "The Dollar Princess," at the National this week. The company will be nearly the same that appeared during the long run of the piece in New York, including Donald Brian, of "Merry Widow" fame. The music, by Leo Fall, is particularly charming.

Chas. Andrew Mack.

Chase's patrons this week will back in the smiles and songs of the Irish singing comedians, Andrew Mack, popularly called "The Irish through," former star of "Myles

Aroon," "Arrah-Na-Pogue," and "The Prince of Bohemia," the latter being his last romantic comedy given last season at the Belasco Theater. A handsome personality, exceptional grace of manner, an inimitable method of winning an audience's confidence, and a superb tenor voice have contributed much to Mr. Mack's art as an actor, and these qualities it is said are manifested in his vaudeville offering in clearer and greater degree than in anything he has done in the past. Among the songs he sings are "Pining," "The Yiddisher Colleen," and "Way, Mr. Moon." The extra added attraction will be Edmund Stanley and company in the Oriental play, "A Royal Romance," based upon Tom Moore's immortal poem, "The Song of the Rovers." The company includes Belle Story, soprano, and Mlle. Hortense Mazaretti, contralto; Patsy Doyle, the Lonesome Comedian; Ina Clayton, one of Charles Frohman's talented comedienne; Lovett, supported by Ruth Handford and Francis Morey, in "His Local Color," the Seven Belviders, in their wonderful English risqué feats; Oscar Louvaine, the noted Hungarian violinist; Marcus and Gartelle, in their grotesque roller-skating burlesque, and the daylight motion picture, showing "The County Fair," complete the programme.

Casino—Vaudeville.

What should prove an interesting vaudeville bill has been arranged for the Casino Theater this week. Among the feature acts announced are Mullen, Carney, and Bartell, who will appear in a comedy sketch entitled "The Janitor," the Leberts, a European novelty acrobatic team; Kaiser's terriers; Bolidin and Quinn, in a comedy musical specialty; Dance and Lize, eccentric song and dance entertainers; and the motion picture plays will complete the bill.

Gayety—"Vanity Fair."

Gus Hill presents at the Gayety Theater this week "Vanity Fair," a spectacular burlesque, comprising a variety of a Music Hall and "A Night in a Roadhouse." Billie Richie and Richard McAllister, comedians, are ably assisted by Charles F. Gordon, Arthur Roach, and Joe Pettengill, while the feminine roles are handled by Anna Woods, Rena La Couver, Winifred Francis, and a large chorus. An excellent vaudeville bill is presented, including such well-known artists as Cook and Sylvia, Dorcas Huxley, Red Raven Cadets, and living pictures. For an extra attraction Tuesday night, there will be a wrestling match between Joe Turner, middle-weight champion of the South, and the English middle-weight champion, Sam Anderson, wearer of the Lord Lonsdale belt.

Lyceum—"World of Pleasure."

One of the most important of this season's offerings at the New Lyceum Theater will delight the patrons of that popular playhouse when "Playing the Ponies" commences its week's engagement. This production is presented by "The World of Pleasure" company, an organization of fifty people who know how to entertain. The piece has been elaborately mounted. Rice and Cady, humorists well known to the vaudeville stage, will be seen in their Gertrude comedy roles, especially written for them. Among the other well-known and popular comedians who help to make folks laugh are Harry Marks Stewart, Will Fox, Harry E. Yost, Edna von Buelow, Herbert Terry, Manning and Drew, and Bernard Kelly. The music is by Theodore Morse and Leo Edwards, the lyrics by Ed Lee. The piece is in two acts and seven scenes.

The Majestic.

A banner show is promised for this week at the Majestic Theater. The feature act is the Parisian mystery, "De Mateos," novelty French artists. The other added attractions are the three Romans, in statue poses and marvelous costumes; comic prima donna; Adolph Adams and company, in impersonations of great men, past and present; Lizzie Waller, queen of the piano; and the Four Castelluccis, who will present a high-class musical act. The Majestic will open and close the bill.

The Cosmos.

A special number of this week's bill at the Cosmos will be May Nannary and company, in the union labor playlet, "The Hand That Rules." This play is credited with being the most absorbing and sensational offering along these lines known to the vaudeville stage.

Andrew Mack and Chase's

Franz Meisel, violinist, plays his third engagement this year at this theater. Viola and Huxley will appear in a novel protean sketch entitled "Character Studies," the Transfield Sisters have a novelty musical act from London; Mr. and Mrs. Byron Spauld will appear in their latest comedy singing sketch, and E. Zello, the world's champion back lifter, will give an impressive exhibition.

The Plaza.

At the Plaza a great Western picture, "The Sheriff's Daughter," and another of intense interest, showing how the bottom of the ocean is inspected, are depicted. "The Diver," with added comedy subjects, will be the features to-day. Messrs. Wallace and Harkins are changing song selections and will have a song treat for Plaza patrons.

The Virginia.

The Virginia has secured the new service of the Independent Films and will show an "American," "Imp," and "Relax" picture daily, and feature Miss Steiner and Master George Moskey, the youngest of motion picture artists. Claude V. Burrows, violinist, and George W. Vail, pianist, are soloists in the afternoons, while in the evenings Harry Chick sings "Get a Girl to Love You."

Alhambra Theater.

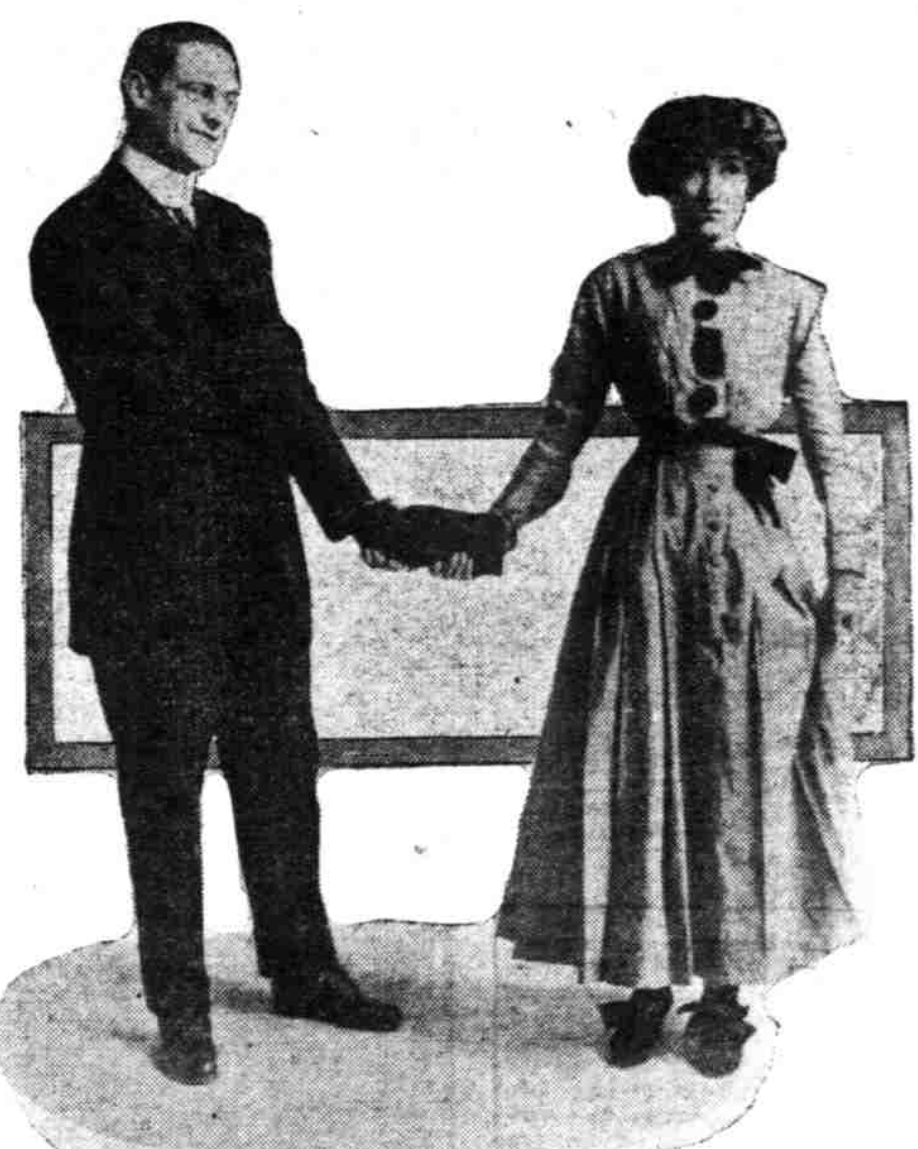
At the Alhambra to-day, a special feature of their big double show will be the funeral of Archibald Ryan, of Philadelphia, who recently died. Among the other pictures are "The Sheriff's Daughter."

## HOW "MIKE" BECAME AN ACTOR.



MABEL HITE.

Those who smile at the mention of the appearance of "Mike" Donlin, the baseball hero, in a serious character role in a legitimate play, merely echo the sentiments of the theatrical managers to whom the suggestion of "Mike's" debut as an actor was first made. When "Mike" married the comedienne, Mabel Hite, it was quite natural that the lady should wish to have her husband-hero ever at her side, so she proposed to her managers that they should engage him. These worthy gentlemen, eager to please their star, gave him the position of acting or business manager with the company headed by his wife. More than that, they would do nothing. They laughed at Miss Hite's assertions that he would "make good" as an actor. It remained for Miss Hite herself to "discover" and develop his latent talents. When offered a lucrative engagement in vaudeville, she accepted conditionally, specifying that her husband should be co-starred with her at the head of the bill. The vaudeville manager, considering the great drawing power of a name as famous as that of "Mike" Donlin, not only consented, but doubled his original offer for the



MABEL HITE AND MIKE DONLIN, IN "A CERTAIN PARTY" AT BELASCO THEATRE

## COMING CONCERTS.

Philharmonic Orchestra.

For the final concert of the Philharmonic Society of New York, at the New National Theater Tuesday afternoon, March 28, a programme is announced that happily combines sensational novelties with standard musical offerings that never fail to please patrons of music. Gustav Mahler has completely recovered from his recent indisposition and will conduct the orchestra on this occasion. For the orchestral sensation of the New York season, the Bach suite, which will also preside at the harpichord, as he has done in all of the New York concerts. Another novelty will be the rhapsody for orchestra, "España," by Chabrier, which has been highly commended everywhere. Of the standard works, two numbers never fail to command the support of the Washington public. They are Tchaikovsky's symphony, "Pathétique," No. 6, B minor, and the Beethoven Leonora Overture, No. 2.

Mme. Kirkly Lunn, the famous contralto of the Metropolitan Opera House Company, will present the two remaining numbers to the programme, one of which will be the well-known aria from "Samson and Delilah." The contract for Mme. Lunn's appearance was only signed last yesterday afternoon, and the news of this great addition will be received with pleasure by all music patrons. It was this famous artist who created the role of Kundry in "Parsifal" and is recognized throughout the world as one of its greatest musical artists.

Saengerbund Concert.

The Washington Saengerbund, with Heinrich Hammer as director, will present its last public concert of the season at the New National Theater to-night. In the sixty years of its existence this organization has never arranged a programme of such uniform excellence. The public concerts of the Saengerbund have been pronounced by critics acquainted with musical affairs in various parts of this country the most artistic given by any organization in America. The work of Heinrich Hammer as a director is so well and favorably known in this city that a perfectly rendered programme is assured.

Following its custom of engaging as soloists only those artists of the first rank, the Saengerbund has secured for this evening, Mme. Jennie Norrell, the famous soprano of the Metropolitan Opera House, and Master Elias Breeskin, whose marvelous ability as a violinist is so well known in this city. Under the direction of Heinrich Hammer the following programme will be presented: Overture, "Ossian," Gade; Washington Symphony Orchestra, "Ossian," Beethoven; Washington Saengerbund; concerto in D minor, Wieniawski; Master Elias Breeskin and orchestra; "Casta Diva," from "Norma," Bellini; Mme. Jennie Norrell; "Muttergesang," Engelhardt, Washington Saengerbund, with baritone solo by Thomas A. Murray; polonaise in D major, Wieniawski; Master Breeskin and orchestra; "Bell Song" from "Lakme," Delibes; Mrs. Norrell; and "An der Schönen Blauen Donau" ("The Blue Danube"), J. Strauss, Saengerbund.

Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Mme. Jomelli, the admired Dutch soprano, will make her first appearance here as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at its fifth and last concert to be given in the New National Theater next Tuesday afternoon, March 21, at 4:30 o'clock. Her first number will be the recitative and air of Lia from Debussy's "L'Enfant Prodigue," and her second, the vocal part in the prelude and "Love Death" of Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde." Debussy's "L'Enfant Prodigue" (The Prodigal Soul) was the work with which he won the Grand Prix de Rome in 1884. As a cantata it has been sung off and on in France and England, and during the past year Debussy has rewritten parts of it and re-scored it, and it was produced in the form of an opera at the Boston Opera House during the current season. It is in Debussy's earlier style and is frankly melodious.

The Wagner excerpt in which Mme. Jomelli takes part is the prelude to which is joined the dying scene of Isolde which comes at the end of the third act of the music drama. Ordinarily the prelude and "Love Death" are represented by orchestras as purely instrumental music, and the opportunity to hear the great scenes which closes this gruebing of love tragedy sung by so distinguished a soprano as Mme. Jomelli does not come very often.

The symphony will be Brahms in C minor, No. 1, a work when it was published was named by van Beethoven as the "tenth" symphony. This is one of Mr. Fielder's favorites and he gives a striking interpretation of it. The other number will be Richard Strauss' tone poem, "Don Juan," which is considered by many the best of his series of works of this character.